



**For Immediate Release
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**Contacts: Vanessa Gulati
617-626-1119**

**STATE ADOPTS FIRST RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN,
FOR MOUNT EVERETT STATE RESERVATION SUMMIT**

The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation's (DCR) Stewardship Council has adopted the Resource Management Plan (RMP) for the Mount Everett State Reservation Summit. The Plan was submitted to the Council at its March 2 meeting, and was unanimously approved. It was the first such plan adopted after DCR was directed to prepare RMPs for all its reservations, parks and forests, pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 21, Section 2F.

The RMP addresses management needs for a 105-acre area at the summit of Mount Everett, located in Mount Everett State Reservation in Mount Washington in the southwest corner of the state, near the borders with New York and Connecticut.

"The overarching goal of the plan is to ensure protection for the unique and rare ecology of the summit area, and to manage public access to afford the hikers superb views of the southern Berkshires," said DCR Commissioner Stephen H. Burrington. "With this Plan in place, and more in the works, DCR will be in position to effectively manage its numerous delicate resources for years to come."

The planning process included several public meetings and a 30-day public comment period, at the end of which over seventy written comments had been submitted by state agencies, environmental organizations, and area residents. The RMP received strong support from a number of DCR's partner organizations, including the Appalachian Trail Conference, the Appalachian Mountain Club, the Nature Conservancy, Green Berkshires, Harvard Forest and the Massachusetts Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program. Strong local support was also expressed by the Mount Washington Board of Selectmen and over 40 area residents.

Members of the public submitted numerous comments as well. "All of the comments that were submitted reflected a passionate appreciation of Mount Everett and its special scenic and ecological values," said Burrington. Over twenty comments were received advocating for the construction of a viewing platform on the Summit, but due to the sensitive and unique ecology of the summit, the RMP does not endorse this proposal.

Numerous scientific studies have documented the significance of the pitch pine ecosystem Mount Everett's summit, including its importance as a habitat for a number of state-listed rare species. The summit area is traversed by the Appalachian Trail, and is also popular with day hikers, offering stunning views of the southern Berkshires.

Priority projects now that the RMP has been adopted include improvements to the main access road to the Reservation and the Guilder Pond parking area, and a restoration of the stone shelter just below the summit.

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COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS · EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

Department of Conservation and Recreation
251 Causeway Street, Suite 600
Boston MA 02114-2119
617-626-1250 617-626-1351 Fax
www.mass.gov/dcr



Mitt Romney
Governor

Kerry Healey
Lt. Governor

Stephen R. Pritchard, Secretary
Executive Office of Environmental Affairs

Stephen H. Burrington, Commissioner
Department of Conservation & Recreation